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Cassis' Cost-Saving Bill Clears Education Committee

Senator's Legislation Streamlines CEPI

LANSING— Cost-saving legislation sponsored by Senate Education Committee Vice-chair Nancy Cassis (R- Novi) passed the Senate Education Committee in a 5-0 vote garnering bi-partisan support from committee members as it heads to the Senate floor.

Senate Bill 365 streamlines the use of the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) by requiring all data submissions go directly to CEPI rather than other state agencies.

“The state is exploring ways to cut costs,” Sen. Cassis said. “By making CEPI a clearinghouse for educational data, it will save state and local tax dollars by allowing CEPI and state agencies to coordinate their efforts and information more efficiently.”

The purpose of CEPI, a state agency under the Department of Management & Budget, is to collect and report data about Michigan's K-12 public schools and make that information available to the public. That data includes student test scores, enrollment figures, graduation and dropout rates, teacher information, pupil/teacher ratios, crime and safety data, financial information, and building infrastructure.

Currently, schools are required to submit their data to CEPI in addition to other state agencies. This has caused duplicated efforts on projects costing the state valuable time and resources.

Under SB 365, state agencies such as the Family Independence Agency, the State Police, and the Department of Education that need information on Michigan's public schools can contact CEPI and the data would be forwarded at the agency's request.

“It is absolutely critical that we provide our children with a quality education,” Cassis said. “We need to find the most cost-effective ways to do that.”

This bill, the first in a five-package series, is the result of hearings held in March by the Senate Education Committee where education leaders discussed ways the committee could legislatively implement measures that would help school districts cut costs.

Two other cost-saving bills in the package passed the education committee on a 3-2 vote. SB 364 allows school districts and public school academies to shorten the school week or school year. The district would still be required to meet the minimum 1,098 hours in the school year. SB 366 would eliminate the required number of days of professional development a school district must provide to its teachers each year.

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